

**Amendments to the Claims:**

The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A transmission apparatus of an all-terrain vehicle comprising:

a non-stage transmission disposed in a power transmission path from an engine to drive wheels;

a forward and backward movement switching device capable of switching to a forward movement position, a neutral position, or a backward movement position, said forward and backward movement switching device being disposed in said power transmission path at a position near said engine; and

a shift operation device of rotary type for switching forward and backward movement disposed on a handle bar at a position adjacent to and inwardly from a handle grip, said shift operation device being independent from said handle grip, said shift operation device and said forward and backward movement switching device being interlocked with each other, said shift operation device including a rotary member for a shift operation and a locking mechanism for locking said rotary member so as not to move toward at least a position for backward movement from a position for neutral, ~~said locking mechanism being configured to be handled by a hand, which is in a state of gripping said handle grip, to make said locking mechanism unlocked.~~

wherein said rotary member is configured to be rotatable about an axis of said handle bar,

wherein said shift operation device includes a holder member fixed on said handle bar, said rotary member being rotatably mounted on said holder member.

2. (Canceled)

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) A transmission apparatus of an all-terrain vehicle according to ~~Claim 3~~claim 1, wherein said locking mechanism includes locking notches formed on said holder member respectively corresponding to positions for forward movement, neutral, and backward movement, a locking pawl supported in a radially movable state by said rotary member so as to be selectively engaged with one of said locking notches, and an operating member for moving said locking pawl so as to be unengaged with said locking notch.

5. (Currently Amended) A transmission apparatus of an all-terrain vehicle according to ~~Claim 4~~claim 1, wherein said locking pawl is pressed outward in a radial direction by an elastic member.

6. (Currently Amended) A transmission apparatus of an all-terrain vehicle according to ~~Claim 4~~claim 1, wherein said operating member includes an unlocking knob integrally formed with said locking pawl and projected radially outward from said rotary member.

7. (New) A transmission apparatus of an all-terrain vehicle comprising:  
a non-stage transmission disposed in a power transmission path from an engine to drive wheels;  
a forward and backward movement switching device capable of switching to a forward movement position, a neutral position, or a backward movement position, said forward and backward movement switching device being disposed in said power transmission path at a position near said engine; and  
a shift operation device of rotary type for switching forward and backward movement disposed on a handle bar at a position adjacent to a handle grp, said shift operation device and said forward and backward movement switching device being interlocked with

each other, said shift operation device including a rotary member for a shift operation and a locking mechanism for locking said rotary member so as not to move toward at least a position for backward movement from a position for neutral, said locking mechanism being configured to be handled by a hand, which is in a state of gripping said handle grip, to make said locking mechanism unlocked,

wherein said rotary member is configured to be rotatable about an axis of said handle bar,

wherein said shift operation device includes a holder member fixed on said handle bar, said rotary member being rotatably mounted on said holder member, and

wherein said locking mechanism includes locking notches formed on said holder member respectively corresponding to positions for forward movement, neutral, and backward movement, a locking pawl supported in a radially movable state by said rotary member so as to be selectively engaged with one of said locking notches, and an operating member for moving said locking pawl so as to be unengaged with said locking notch.

8. (New) A transmission apparatus of an all-terrain vehicle according to claim 7, wherein said locking pawl is pressed outward in a radial direction by an elastic member.

9. (New) A transmission apparatus of an all-terrain vehicle according to claim 7, wherein said operating member includes an unlocking knob integrally formed with said locking pawl and projected radially outward from said rotary member.